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March 2, 2016

**TESTIMONY OF SHELDON TOUBMAN BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH  
COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF SB 295**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Sheldon Toubman and I am an attorney with New Haven Legal Assistance Association. I am here in support of SB 295, concerning access to imaging services.

I mostly represent Medicaid enrollees on issues related to access to health care services. We should all be proud of the great strides we have made in the Medicaid program since moving beyond capitated managed care organizations, replacing them with a non-risk administrative service organization, and adopting evidence-based care coordination programs like patient-centered medical homes and intensive care management. Access to primary care providers has substantially improved, the quality of care is up and, in terms of the current budget situation, Connecticut's Medicaid program is a major cost control success: not only have per member per month costs dropped, but even as our Medicaid enrollment has increased, absolute costs in terms of state dollars have declined, with total Medicaid costs for the state budget having dropped \$185 million from fiscal year 2014 to fiscal year 2015.

Nevertheless, given the concerns our clients continue to bring to us regarding access to health services, I am obligated to identify areas where we still have work to do. The primary area is access to non-hospital based specialists. Largely due to provider rates, this continues to be a significant issue for our clients. And one of those areas is radiology services. Although our clients on Medicaid can generally receive these services at a hospital, receiving services outside of that context is difficult, and made more so by the recent reduction in radiology rates last year to 57% of Medicare rates.

Since the rates for radiology were reduced, our clients who need these services for purposes of detecting breast cancer, etc., are finding fewer options for getting those services, and at least one facility which served them has closed. This is problematic for all of our clients, but particularly for women of color.

We should conduct studies of access to determine the extent to which low specialist rates are impacting access for Medicaid enrollees. SB 295 would require this study for radiology services by the Department of Public Health, and so I urge you to pass favorably on this proposal, which will not require any new expenditure of state funds.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.